

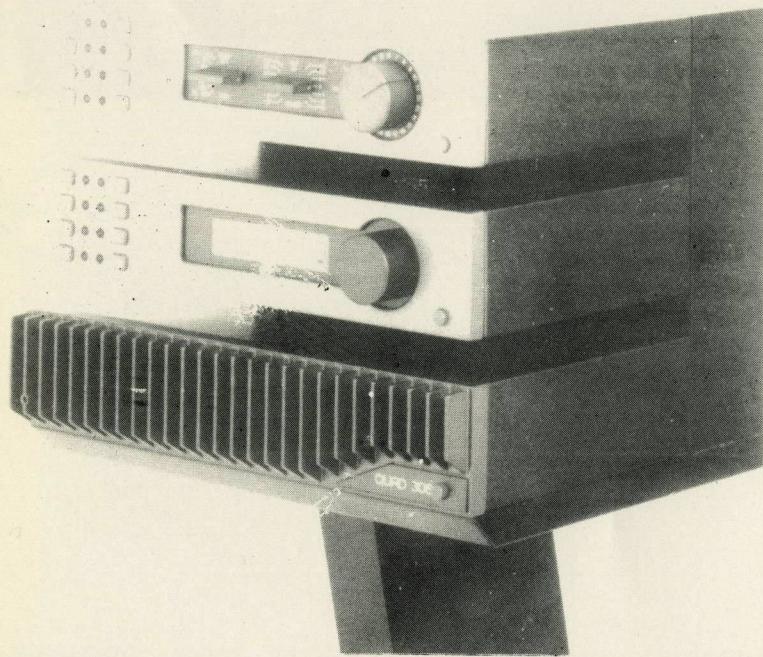
No. 166 February 1989

Hillandale

NEWS



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The HILLANDALE News

The Official Journal of The City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society

Founded in 1919

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THE KEYNOTE OF THIS February edition is "Welcome Back", and there are two occasions for celebration. One is the reappearance of a favourite feature, too long absent, the "People, Paper, and Things" column contributed by George Frow. Can there be anyone who knows more about the peripheral fringes of our hobby than does George? More about the personalities and peculiarities surrounding talking machines and their accoutrements? I doubt it, so I am thankful that he has agreed, once more, to take on the rôle of our Peterborough, our William Hickey, and for no more than the same very reasonable fee we pay to all our contributors, namely nothing at all.

Even more pleasing is the opportunity to welcome back into our fold the members of the Phonograph Society of New South Wales. There was once an Australian Branch of the City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society, based in Sydney, but it fell victim to the sort of schism which (as we read in our last edition) befell the North London P. & G.S. seventy years ago. Out of the smoke and ruins there arose the Phonograph Society of N.S.W., whose President, David Ian McCallum, contributes a most welcome offering on page 162. I may say that I have seen a copy of his Society's magazine: it is very good indeed, and I hope many of our members will respond to his suggestion and subscribe to it. Whilst on this antipodean theme: we had three complaints from our "proper" Australian members that they did not receive their copies of the August "Hillandale News". We have checked with the Post Office here, and they insist that the failing did not stem from our end. Well, they would, wouldn't they, as the lady said. Replacement copies have been sent, but I apologise to any Australian members who have been annoyed in this way.

T.C.

Best of Luck!

by Colin Johnson

THIS IS A STORY OF pure luck, a succession of instances of being in the right place at the right time. I am usually the person who is in the wrong place. I am the one who goes into a shop to be told: "Sorry sir, if only you'd come in yesterday . . . we had some then, but they've all gorn." And "they" can be anything from mothballs to microwave ovens - fate is not discriminating.

However, Lady Luck smiled on me the day I went to a school in Chatham. "Hillandale" readers with long memories may recall edition No.131 of April 1983, in which I gave details of the K.E.C. (Kent Education Committee) gramophone. A local school had found one of these machines, a badge-engineered Decca, and through a parent who knew of my interest, had asked me to find some missing parts, such as a soundbox. Thanks to the good offices of Phonoparts and fellow CLPGS members I managed to oblige. As I was leaving the school after fixing the missing items, one of the staff asked me if an old wooden box containing a gramophone motor was any use to me. "Never turn down the offer of anything gramophonic" has been my motto. The box was located in a science laboratory where it had been used in stroboscope experiments. Well, it certainly was a gramophone motor, and it was in a wooden box . . . the case of an oak Senior Monarch, to be precise! Despite its misuse, the remnants of what had been a very handsome machine were in surprisingly good condition. The motor still ran well despite the lack of the governor, which had been removed to facilitate the experiments. Apart from a couple of minor nicks in the wood and serious flaking of the varnish, the cabinet was in good condition, and still possessed its "Gramophone Co. Ltd, City Road" transfer, and a dealer's plate: "Wharton and Sillifant, Rochester". The turntable had long ago lost its felt, but the brake, speed control and winder handle were all in situ.

I muttered my thanks to the

teacher, who was quite apologetic about unloading the school's old rubbish onto me, and I drove off with what Christopher Proudfoot was later to refer to as "an interesting project" on the back seat.

Putting the motor back into order was a simple matter of taking the governor from an already well-cannibalised contemporary motor, but I was left with one or two small problems, like a missing back bracket, tone arm, soundbox, elbow, and Morning Glory horn. "You'll never manage to find those missing bits in a month of Sundays" said my elders and betters in the Society, as my rescued Monarch sat in the loft, and for more than three years it seemed that my elders and betters were right. But in August 1986, during a holiday in Norfolk, my wife, daughter and I visited a little local "bygones" exhibition. The bygones included a splendid oak Senior Monarch which I admired. The curator confided to me that only a few weeks before, an elderly gentleman had given the museum the remains of a Monarch with the comment "the motor might come in handy for spares". Hardly daring to hope, I asked: "Does it have the back bracket and tone arm?" A search through a shed revealed that it did, and it did not take much effort on my part to persuade the curator that while he might need a spare motor, it was unlikely he needed a spare back bracket and tone arm. It was obvious that there was no Morning Glory horn lurking in the shed, and a quick search revealed no trace of a horn elbow either.

The back bracket was very rusty, and time and corrosion had turned the tone arm an interesting shade of matt dark grey. Careful cleaning, however, soon revealed the metal surfaces.

I was now more than ever determined to have the machine fully restored to its original glory, but without a horn that was going to be difficult. During a conversation with a senior Society member about my problem, he admitted he had a spare Morning Glory horn and elbow. Resisting my first reaction, to say "Pull the other leg, it's got bells on it", I further learned that his machine - less the horn and elbow -

had been borrowed by someone who had failed to return it. A quick negotiation and I was the proud possessor of a horn and elbow. A soundbox of the correct vintage for the machine was acquired from another Society member, who just happened to have a supply of Exhibition soundboxes. I now had virtually all the parts of my machine, but was short of little things like the knurled bolts for securing the back bracket, and the bolt and triangular plate for holding the horn elbow onto the back bracket. I was quoted silly prices by engineering companies, happy to make the bits if I would buy 500 of each. But through a local model engineering society I met a retired metalwork teacher, who produced beautifully crafted reproductions from originals I borrowed from an understanding Monarch owner.

I could have assembled the whole machine there and then, but I wanted to return it to as near its original condition as possible. The cabinet was the first to get attention. The varnish resisted all attempts at renovation, and continued to flake off with accelerating rapidity. Eventually I decided I had no alternative but to strip off the old. First I sought the advice of a furniture restorer friend, who identified the finish on the 80-year-old case not as conventional varnish, nor French polish, but spirit varnish, a product seldom encountered these days. I helped the remaining vestiges of varnish from the case with a fine wire wool, using a scalpel around the precious Gramophone Company transfer. No local shops could help with spirit varnish, so I sought the help of Maidstone Museum, which has a knowledgeable curator. He referred me to an amazing company called John Myland Ltd. of South East London. Their catalogue includes just about every stain, varnish, polish, lacquer, abrasive, glue, filler, sealer and solvent one could require. And despite the fact that the firm obviously caters for industrial customers, they didn't bat an eyelid when I ordered a couple of litres of spirit varnish. They even delivered it to my home, a distance of 50 miles, free of charge! I left the case-varnishing to my expert friend, my own talents with a paint-brush being restricted to making horrendous dribbles with non-drip gloss

paint. I busied myself with cleaning the metalwork. The tonearm and back bracket needed replating, as did the brake and winder, as well as the newly-made metal items like bolts. I found a small plating company in the Medway Towns, prepared to take on the fiddly job. I decided on dull nickel rather than bright finish, as being more in keeping with the age and appearance of the machine. When the dull grey parts were returned I polished them with burnishing soap and a polishing mop until they reached the same warm sheen as the speed control, which had not needed replating.

The final job was restoring the horn. At some time a couple of the petals had been bent, and someone had brush-painted the inside with black enamel. I managed to straighten the worst of the dents, and resolved to repaint the inside using a spray. However, when I gingerly removed the brush-painted enamel, the original black finish remained beneath. I removed the later paint inch by inch, and realised that the horn would not need repainting at all. It was a simple matter to mix some gloss with matt Humbrol enamel and carefully touch in the chips in the original paint which, these days, we would refer to as silk finish! When the touching-up was dry I carefully rubbed down the whole horn with T-cut, as used on car paintwork, and finished off with a coat of car polish. I must admit I felt justified in having a small family celebration to mark the machine's completion. After all, if people can have the Queen to tea, why shouldn't I give a party for a Monarch?

From start to finish my "interesting project" took some five years. I am now the proud possessor of a magnificent machine which looks splendid and plays well, thanks to many people, but thanks also, in no small measure, to luck. For example, had I not repaired that school gramophone . . . had my friend's "hornless" Monarch been returned by the borrower . . . had I not visited that little museum in Norfolk. And talking about Norfolk, there's this shed, you see, and in it there's this old wooden box with a gramophone motor in it . . .

CARUSO'S DEATH

by Peter Martland

I WAS RESEARCHING AMONG British Newspapers a few years back, when I came across accounts of Caruso's death as reported by "The Times" and "The Daily Telegraph". They made fascinating reading as they gave not only a detailed account of what was going on in Naples, where Caruso had died, but also because they assessed Caruso the artist and his artistic legacy.

The facts surrounding Caruso's tragic death are straightforward enough, though with the passage of time they have become shrouded in myth. He had been taken seriously ill at the end of 1920 in the USA, and had undergone several operations in a vain attempt to drain a succession of huge abscesses in his pleural cavity. Sadly in the days before antibiotics and penicillin the primary infection was never fully treated and the condition reappeared whilst he was holidaying in Italy. He died of peritonitis on the 2nd of August 1921.

Both *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph* on the 3rd and 4th of August give the story prominence, and provide us with a fascinating insight into the life and tragic end of the singer. The story unfolds within the framework of other news items: famine in the Soviet Union, peace negotiations with the Irish, and as the event took place over the Bank Holiday weekend, there was even a story headed "Bank Holiday traffic (almost a pre-war standard)".

At that time, and for many years after, both newspapers printed advertisements on the front pages. So the unfolding drama surrounding Caruso's death takes place on the inside pages, in tightly packed columns. *The Daily Telegraph* did print a picture of the dead tenor in a black surround on the third of August, the day the story broke. In an account that ran to two columns, Caruso's death in Naples was told. The sources appear to have been Reuters and Exchange wires sent from Rome. The obituary drew heavily on a recent biography that the *Daily Telegraph* had serialised by the American writer Pierre Key. The writer had suggested that Caruso's best roles were: Rhadames (Aida), Canio (Pagliacci), and Des Grieux (Manon). It was however Caruso's fabulous wealth that drew the journalist's

eye. Fees of \$2,500 for a single appearance at the Met. and royalties from gramophone estimated at \$125,000 were mentioned.

The Times in its obituary, compared Caruso unfavourably with De Reské. It argued that De Reské's combination of power and extreme beauty of quality outclassed Caruso's. Rather cattily the writer - anonymous but possibly Ernest Newman - recalled Caruso's London Debut in 1902. He wrote, "One newspaper, which need not be particularised, the readers were informed "the part of the Duke was carefully sung by M. Caruso" just that and nothing more. On the other hand, another critic with a true flair for the first rate, wired the North that same first night, without the smallest qualification, that Caruso had the finest Italian tenor voice he had ever heard in London for thirty years."

The same *Times* article commented on Caruso's gramophone records. Interestingly, they are criticised as they "lack tone, miss the velvety quality of voice ..." which the writer saw as being "... the peculiar quality that lifted Caruso above his fellows." Rather unkindly, the writer continued, commenting: "Apart from a voice, nature had not been kind to him. Heavy in figure and plain in looks he could not look the part as Mario and De Reské did." Despite his somewhat acid comments, the writer concluded his assessment: "Still, over and above, his one superlative gift, he was a thorough artist. He had a passion for efficiency, and a limitless capacity for taking pains."

The story of Caruso's death and funeral ran until Saturday the sixth August 1921, and then mainly in the columns of *The Daily Telegraph*. On 4th August they ran a quote from *The Chicago Tribune*, ". . . Caruso had a



dream of death." Also in that same edition there was a column headed "Today's funeral." From Sydney, Australia, came Melba's tribute to her old partner: ". . . a great artist, bon comrade, and a charming man." In a final press comment *The Daily Telegraph's* "Music of the Day" column, in an affectionate look at the man, commented wistfully, "that with his death yet another link with the glorious pre-war summers had been broken." Ironically, at the side of this article was the HMV monthly issues advertisement. This included: Fritz Kreisler, "Chanson Indus", (5-7915), and John McCormack "O Cease thy singing Maiden Fair" also with Kreisler, (5-2377).

With a comic irony that Caruso would have approved, *The Daily Telegraph* printed a piece from The Central News Strabane correspondent headed "Singer's Irish Mother". "No newspaper seems to have disclosed the fact that Caruso's mother was Jessie Donohue, an Irish woman whose relatives and cousins reside in Strabane, County Tyrone."

Our illustration shows a "Caruso" display presented at the Michigan "Phonovention '87". The picture was sent to us by Paul S. Embert.

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Obituary

JOHN BRATLEY

Dear Sir,

Sadly I have to report the passing, on Monday October 24th, of a long-time member of the C.L.P.G.S., John K. Bratley, of Liphook, Hampshire. He was an active member in the early days: he once told me he started to collect 78s when a very young lad. I first met him in 1943 and we continued to keep in touch whilst he was in Salisbury, S.Rhodesia, (as it was then). Upon his retirement from his job as Commercial Manager with Central African Airways, he returned to his home at Liphook, where he had a large collection of gramophones, phonographs, and music boxes, plus a large library of records and cylinders. In later years he suffered from crippling arthritis: this prevented him from playing his piano, which he much loved to do. During the last few years he was more or less housebound.

Yours sincerely, George Overstall

THE ZONOPHONE RECORD

AND ITS ASSOCIATED LABELS IN BRITAIN

by Frank Andrews

THIS HISTORY IS A REVISED version of the paper presented to the Society in August 1987, at Neasden Library, London N.W., when examples of the discs were played and transparencies of the labels projected. Also on display were early advertisements and a series of Zonophone Records covers.

The Coming of the Zonophones

Although many in Britain might regard Zonophone Records as essentially British they were, as a matter of record, sold in all five continents at one period or another. The production of the first Zonophone machines and discs occurred in the United States as a result of disputations among the GRAMOPHONE interests there, and a patents suit brought against the gramophone by the Columbia companies.

By 1896 the business carried on in Gramophones and E. BERLINER'S GRAMOPHONE discs in the United States had developed to such an extent that two companies were responsible for it. One was The United States Gramophone Company with Emile Berliner, the inventor, as its president: this was the Letters Patent owning and licensing company. The other was The Berliner Gramophone Company, president Horace Parvin, which was the licensed company, responsible for the manufacturing and sales of the Gramophone and its discs, although there were also a few independent selling, regional agencies. Emile Berliner was an employee of the latter company, in charge of the recording laboratory.

During 1896 spring-wound motors for talking machines were being manufactured, and the first for the Berliner company were made under contract from a firm called Montross. Before the order was completed, Eldridge R. Johnson took over the contract at his Camden, New Jersey workshops, where he improved the motors and made other alterations to produce The Improved Gramophone. With the prospect of increased demand the Berliner Gramophone Co. then engaged Frank Seaman, a New York advertising agent, to "push" the new Gramophone, and contracted him to act exclusively for sales throughout the United States,

except for Washington and the District of Columbia, already the sales preserve of Berliner himself and his United States Gramophone Company.

To promote the objectives of his agency, Frank Seaman assisted in founding another company, the National Gramophone Company, in New York City in October 1896, absorbing the few minor agencies, as he was then the sole sales agent. This new company promoted and sold not only in his exclusive U.S.A. market but world-wide, wherever there was a potential market. To increase the repertoire more rapidly, Seaman set up a recording studio in his New York branch, using Gavin Childs as the recording expert. The general manager there was William Barry Owen. Artists were contracted and recorded, supplementing the recordings undertaken in Philadelphia by the Berliner Gramophone Company.

Seaman's promotion of the Gramophone and its records was highly successful and he looked to Britain, where some exportations had already taken place, to further augment his business. Manager Owen sailed for England in 1897. He hoped to establish a British branch of the American gramophone business, based on Berliner's Royal Letters Patent. Owen was greeted in London by John Watson Hawd, an engineer, who became his assistant. From rooms hired in the Cecil Hotel, in the Strand, they began trading in Gramophones and records, using Seaman's National Gramophone Company's stationery with its New York address. At the same time Owen was trying to attract British capital to set up a British company.

Machines and records ordered by British dealers and customers were sent from New York by Frederick M. Prescott, a member of a family import-export business with various lines, operating in

the Edison Building in New York City. Prescott was appointed sole exporter by Seaman.

In London in April 1898, Owen, who had earlier resigned his post as manager of the New York branch, was appointed managing director of The Gramophone Company of London, a syndicate he had brought together to exploit Berliner's Royal Letters Patent. Two months later, Fred Gaisberg, from the Berliner Gramophone Company's recording laboratory, arrived in London, moving into rooms in a disused hotel in Maiden Lane, quite near to the Hotel Cecil in The Strand. There he started making commercial recordings for the new company in August 1898.

From the first, the Gramophone Company associated itself with Deutsche Grammophon G.m.b.H. of Hannover, another new company founded by members of the Berliner family. This company was to be responsible for the manufacture of the new European recordings, at first to be pressed in Joseph Berliner's telephone factory at Hannover, which would supply Britain and its Empire, Europe, and the Near and Middle East.

In New York, Seaman and Prescott realised immediately that their export trade was in danger, for not only would their gramophones and records be in less demand but, unless some accommodating agreement could be reached, their own exports would infringe the patents and trade mark rights of all new companies formed outside the U.S.A. Eldridge R. Johnson was in a more fortunate position: he could supply his Gramophones to the orders of the new British and German companies, either as complete machines or as unassembled parts.

A "Zonophone" Arrives

Back in America Seaman had been trying to supplement his line of Johnson-built Gramophones with the offer of cheaper lines to the Berliner Gramophone Company. His particular interest was for an automatic coin-fed machine: but his overtures were refused. Then, in October 1898, one month before the Gramophone Company put its disc records on sale in London, and much to his Licensor's

disapproval, Seaman repeated an advertisement for a Johnson Gramophone, calling it "The Improved Gramophone-Zonophone". One explanation given for the use of the word "Zonophone" was that "Gramophone" by itself in advertising, could easily be mistaken for "Graphophone", Columbia's cylinder-playing talking machines!

From this point onward relationships between Seaman and the Berliner Gramophone Company deteriorated. With hindsight it may appear that his use of the word "Zonophone" anticipated a move towards the day when he could become independent of the Berliner Gramophone Company, with its restrictions to the Johnson-made Gramophones, and when he could obtain supplies from other sources. Eventually Seaman was to become one of the founders of The Universal Talking Machine Company of Yonkers, New York State, where the first distinctive Zonophone machines would be made.

To anticipate events a little. Through successful patent suits brought by the Columbia interests against Seaman and the National Gramophone Company, following upon infringement admissions made by the National Corporation, the Gramophone business in America was in difficulties, with Seaman, as from May 1900, unable to prosecute business in the United States market. Until then Columbia had licensed Joseph W. Jones and his American Talking Machine Company, which produced Vitaphone machines and Vitaphone "Disks" made by Jones' special process.* While the litigation was in progress that eventually led to the court order of May 1900, the Universal Talking Machine Company made its first Zonophone machines. Seaman, although in breach of his contract, was able to stock them, and stopped ordering gramophones in October 1899. If Seaman failed to order nobody else could sell

* In USA Patent No.688,739 **Production of Sound Records**, filed November 1897, granted December 1901, Joseph W. Jones proposed a method of producing sound discs by an electrolytic process which differed from Berliner's engraving process. His process was later acquired by the Columbia interests.

them, although Eldridge Johnson had an assured outlet with the Gramophone Company in London.

The First Zonophone Records

It is almost certain that the already founded National Gramophone Corporation (of March 1899, with Seaman as treasurer) had been formed to develop the new business in Zonophones. At first that company took over the sales of Gramophones and its discs from the National Gramophone Company, which was put into liquidation a few months later. The Corporation took on the sales of Zonophones in October 1899. Shortly after that, Seaman was denied any more deliveries of Berliner discs which he continued to order.

The new 7-inch Zonophone Records had yet to put in an appearance. When they did appear in numbers, in the Spring of 1900 (exact date unknown) a feature of them, plain to see, was an indentation moulded into the backs of the discs - an anti-slip device made to fit a protruding peg in the Zonophone turntables. From collector's evidence it appears that many American Berliner discs were drilled through to accommodate the peg in the Zonophone turntable.

The Zonophone Records were probably put on sale just a few weeks before May 5th 1900, prior to Seaman's having been ordered by the court to cease dealing in Gramophones and their records. The earliest Zonophone discs may have been those bearing the UNIVERSAL TALKING MACHINE COMPANY name embossed in the central area. A known artist credit on this type is the "Zonophone Orchestra". On the other hand it is possible that this type of disc was produced on one of two other occasions: firstly to avoid the infringement of the Zonophone trade marks when the Gramophone Companies in Britain, France, Germany and Italy registered the name to keep the Zonophone competition at bay or, secondly, the omission of Zonophone Record may have followed upon the National Gramophone Corporation being put into liquidation in September 1901, when it was required to omit its name from the disc. This second contingency is unlikely, as paper labels were then coming into use.

The National Gramophone Corporation appointed F.M. Prescott as its exporting agent, and he visited Europe both in 1899 and 1900 to assess the marketing possibilities for the Zonophone lines.

As a matter of course The Zonophone and its records, being similar products to the Gramophone and its discs, were equally open to charges of infringement of Columbia's Bell-Tainter patents. Columbia's successful case against the National Gramophone Company ended in a "consent order" on May 5th 1900, the "Corporation" having taken over the "Company's" Gramophone business, consenting. That was two days after the British Bell-Tainter patent had expired. It was owned by Edison Bell, who had come to an arrangement with The Gramophone Company allowing it to proceed with its business.

On 18th May 1900 the National Gramophone Corporation and the Universal Talking Machine Co. concluded an exclusive licensing contract with the Columbia interests (the patent having three more years to run in America) with the Columbia Phonograph Company General (of 1984) taking on its first sales of disc machines and records by stocking the Zonophone line.

As that was an exclusive contract, Columbia's support for Joseph W. Jones' American Talking Machine Company, with its Vitaphone machines and "Disks" must have terminated at that time. The Berliner Gramophone Co., with its exclusive agent and itself prevented from selling its products in the United States, as a result of the May 5th order, had no option but to dismiss its employees and close down. Emil Berliner emigrated to Montreal, Canada, where he founded another Gramophone business in machines and records, soon constituted as The Berliner Gram-O-phone Company of Canada Limited.

The First Zonophone Records In Britain

If the plainly embossed UNIVERSAL TALKING MACHINE COMPANY discs were not the first "Zonophone Records", then the earliest were probably those bearing

the NATIONAL GRAMOPHONE CORPORATION'S name in an embossed shield-shaped cartouche above the spindle hole, and named as "ZONOPHONE RECORD". This type of disc was almost certainly the first to be sold in Britain, ordered from Prescott or from The National Gramophone Corporation or its British representative.

It is not certain where the first Zonophone Records were manufactured. They may have been pressed at the Universal Talking Machine Company's Yonkers factory, with materials supplied by the Auburn Button Works, or by the Burt Company of America, both known suppliers, and each of whom may have pressed the discs as well.

Some of the earliest repertoire on Zonophone Records was pirated from Berliner discs, an employee, John C. English, supervising the conversions in a New York laboratory.

Ever since the Gramophone Company had been founded in London, Seaman (and to a lesser extent, Prescott) is known to have been in continual correspondence with his ex-manager and fellow director, William B. Owen in London, with regard to his American business which he had hoped to develop on a reciprocal basis, based on a verbal agreement. Having received no satisfaction in this appears to have been another factor inducing him to pursue the Zonophone business under Columbia's licence. The Berliner Gramophone Co. had also refused to take his Zonophone machines.

The Nine-Inch Zonophone Records

In May 1901, a year after being licensed, The National Gramophone Corporation introduced a 9" Zonophone Record, advertised as the "SUPERBA" but later referred to as "CONCERT", neither description appearing upon the discs themselves. The 7" size continued, described as "PARLOR". Record numbers were prefixed "P" or "C" accordingly. Later productions of both sizes were given a white pigmentation in the embossed centres. Shortly after the introduction of the 9" size the Corporation went into voluntary liquidation.

The International Zonophone Company

At the same time that the 9" Zonophones were issued a new business, under the name of THE INTERNATIONAL ZONOPHONE COMPANY, was founded in New York. One of its principal organisers, and a first director, was Frederick M. Prescott, the exclusive exporter for the National Gramophone Corporation. His visits to Europe had convinced him that there was scope for increasing the Zonophone business, especially as patents had expired, or were due to expire.*

Prescott and the International Zonophone Company, with engineers and mechanics, quickly established a record making factory and headquarters in Berlin, in operation by August 1901. All non-American Zonophone machine and disc business was to be directed from there for some time to come.

In the United States, with the National Gramophone Corporation going into liquidation, the Universal Talking Machine Company was left without a sales agency except for the new International Zonophone Company trading in Europe and elsewhere outside of the American continent. Upon expert advice the Universal Talking Machine board formed a further company, THE UNIVERSAL TALKING MACHINE MANUFACTURING COMPANY, to manufacture Zonophone machines and records, with itself becoming the sales agency for the United States. With a new manufacturer in America the Zonophone Records required a change in the way their centres were embossed, so the shield design was eliminated, and with it the disappearance of the National Corporation's name. The new style disc had ZONOPHONE RECORD embossed as a crescent within an outlining cartouche and decorated with two crossed clarions and a lyre. The inscriptions were filled with white pigment. This type of American Zonophone Record appeared just a little later than the first 7" and 10"

* The Bell-Tainter patent for recording into wax or wax-like substances by cutting a groove expired in Britain at midnight of May 3-4th 1900. The Bell-Tainter patents did not expire in the USA until 1903.

ZONOPHON SCHALLPLATTEN, with their black and gold paper labels, manufactured in Berlin. Some recordings from the new type American "label" and the earlier "shield" type were included in the International Zonophone Company's International Catalogue, and would have been available to British stockists.

Universal Zonophone Records (USA)

With paper labels in use in Berlin, Zonophone Records in America became UNIVERSAL ZONOPHONE RECORDS, sporting green and gold labels. The words UNIVERSAL ZONOPHONE curved around the top of the label, with the crossed clarions and lyre motif retained beneath. Below these inscriptions the word RECORD formed an arc above the spindle hole. A brown material supplied by the Auburn Button Works was used in making the discs, and that firm may have carried out the pressing. Discs still came in both 7" and 9" sizes.

Although this label was not registered to the Universal Talking Machine Co. until June 1903 it is possible that it was in use before then and, if so, it would have been the last type of label to have contributed some of its repertoire to the International Zonophone Company's catalogue before that company lost its independence.

When the International Zonophone Co. had been founded in May 1901 a contractual condition of its operations was that it had to accept for sale products of the Universal Talking Machine Co. to a given total, expressed in dollars per annum.

From the outset, after the first Zonophone machines began to arrive in Europe, and before Berliner's patents had expired, The Gramophone Company and Deutsche Grammophon had watched ports of entry for the Zonophone lines, and threatened their confiscation as infringing their patents. It was prior to the expiry of those patents that the European companies began to register the word Zonophone as their own trade mark, as a further means of fending off competition to their monopoly. In justification, it was argued that Seaman had described Gramphones as Zonophones back in the

USA as early as February 1898, conveniently overlooking the fact that The Berliner and The United States Gramophone Companies had then been quite opposed to the word Zonophone being used with respect to their Gramophones. The several Gramophone companies also registered "Vitaphone" as their trade mark, to thwart the activities of Joseph W. Jones and The American Talking Machine Company, for since May 1900 they were compelled to seek markets outside the USA, Columbia having given sole licensing powers to Zonophone.

The First British-recorded Zonophone Records

The first records to come from the International Zonophone Company's Berlin factory in September 1901 were all German recordings. They began two series of catalogue numbers which were to progress internationally. The 7" Zonophon Schallplatten began at number 1, and the 10" (the first of such size to be sold in Europe) began at number XI. American Zonophones, later included in the International catalogues, kept their original or "renumbered in America" serial numbers. The 9" size carried an X prefix in the catalogues as if they were of 10" size. So as to avoid duplicating the American numbers, when European numbers reached the lowest American number, they (the European numbers) began again at a number higher than the highest in the American sequence. This explains why there is a huge gap in the numbering of the International Zonophone Company's catalogues.

The contracting of artists and the sales of the Zonophone lines were put into the hands of Agents who were gradually appointed in several European countries and in Egypt and the Near East. In Berlin, Bumb and König naturally became the International's first agent for Germany. They were already well established as importers and dealers of Zonophone products, and had named that part of their business the Zonophone Company G.m.b.H.

Until 4th May 1900 all imports of American talking machine goods, except for the Gramophone, had been dealt in by several firms, if legitimate, all under

licence to the Edison Bell Consolidated Phonograph Co. Ltd. One of the more important of them was Nicole Frères Ltd., famous for the sale and repair of music boxes, its own and those of other makers. Nicole, dealing in Gramophones and Edison phonographs, changed to the Zonophone at about the time that the International Zonophone Company began selling its recordings.

As the low serial numbers of Zonophone reveal, British artists had been recorded an an early date, but where and by whom is not clear. Dan Smoot is the most likely "expert" to have taken the recordings, having come to Europe with Prescott. According to Joe Batten, Smoot had been recording cylinders at Hatton Garden in September 1900: they were probably for the House of Prescott in New York, which advertised recordings of the latest London Music Hall songs and other items.*

The first Zonophone Records in the British repertoire were 7-inch 573 to 708, and 10-inch X224 to X271.

During 1902 the International Zonophone Co. was unable to meet the orders placed by Nicole Frères. Henry Cowen, International's British representative, who had many connections in the talking machine industry, suggested that Nicole might start making its own discs, and even venture into cylinder recording. His associate in this idea was George Henry Burt, of the Burt Company of America, one of the co-founders, and a co-director, of the new Crystalate Manufacturing Co. Ltd. at Golden Green, Hadlow, near Tonbridge in Kent, in England. Burt had an exclusive agreement with Emil Berliner, binding him not to disclose the essentials of a certain formulated mix of materials, nor to supply it to others for the purpose of disc manufacture. He and his American company were free to supply other formulations, as he may have done for American Zonophones, some of whose masters appear to have been used for his own Climax Record discs: in fact Climax

Records have been reported in America pressed with Zonophone backing dies and Zonophone matrices!

Besides its Berliner and Zonophone connections, the Burt Company had formed the Globe Record Company for making its own Climax Records, at about the time The National Gramophone Corporation had been put into liquidation. Globe Record Company was sold in 1902 to Eldridge R. Johnson, who was then into recording with his own business after the Berliner Gramophone Co. had been compelled to close its doors. Johnson (as the Victor Talking Machine Co.) was being harried by Columbia for patent infringement, as he was selling Gramophones as Victor Talking Machines. On the understanding that he would not be harried further, Johnson sold his recently acquired Globe Record Co. to Columbia, having held it for only one month. So Cowen had a useful contact in Burt when suggesting that, with his help, Nicole Frères could enter into disc production for themselves.

Cowen was also a director of The International Phonograph & Indestructible Record Co. Ltd., of Liverpool, with which were connected, as fellow directors, Prescott of International Zonophone, Ademor N. Petit, an applicant in the USA for a patent for discs recorded on each face, and Elsworth Hawthorne, of Hawthorne & Sheble, USA.** The Liverpool company was acting as an outlet for the International Zonophone Co. in the Northern part of Britain. Besides any cylinder recordings it undertook for itself, it also took copies from other makers' records, which it sold as "The International & Indestructible Record Co. Ltd." Records: these pirated cylinders will be familiar to many readers.

Nicole Frères Ltd. accepted Cowan's suggestion and, in late 1902, experimented with recording and "printing" its

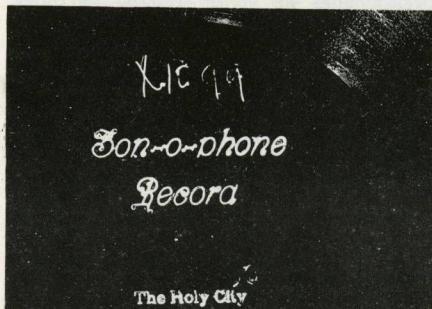
** Hawthorne & Sheble, along with the Prescotts, were responsible for the founding of the American Record Company, with its blue material "Indian Records", the 27cm. size having some exports to Europe as Duplex Odeon "Blue" Records.

* Joe Batten's book - **The Story of Sound Recording**. Rockcliffe Publishing Corporation, London 1956.

own disc records. In the earliest stages Giannini Bettini, of Paris, was involved, but difficulties and disagreements arose, and he withdrew, along with others joining the venture. Even so, Nicole continued to deal in Zonophone machines and records.

The First Appointed British Agency for Zonophones & Zonophone Records

In March 1903 an exclusive British Agency for the International Zonophone Co. was granted to the London branch of the Parisian firm of Ch. et J. Ullman, at 9 Butler Street, London E.C. This continued to supply the Liverpool outlet, then trading as The Zonophone Supply Company at Castle Street, Liverpool, the



address of H. Cramer Roberts, an English director of the International Phonograph & Indestructible Record Co., where an "Edison Bell Supply Company" was also in business. Ch. & J. Ullman were already the Zonophone Agents in France, Belgium and Switzerland. At this time The Universal Talking Machine Manufacturing Co. had begun an action in London to deprive the Gramophone & Typewriter Ltd. (formerly The Gramophone Co. Ltd.) of its proprietorship in the registered trade mark "Zon-O-phone", claiming that all Zonophone products were made, or had been made, by itself and its associated companies or predecessors in New York or Berlin. The action was successful, and a High Court order of April 24th 1903 ordered the registration to be "expunged". The Universal Talking Machine Manufacturing Company's own application for "Zon-O-phone" was registered.

To be continued

Letter

With or without crackle ?

Dear Ted,

I was very pleased to read the three long articles by Adrian Tuddenham and Peter Copeland on various aspects of playing old records, particularly as they touched so lightly and clearly on many technical topics which collectors might feel are either beyond them or not worth the bother: even digital filters (without the aid of a diagram!)

Obviously there were some details hardly covered in such a survey, such as the complications of how a cartridge can be held in a nominally fixed position relative to the groove as the modulations pass by the stylus - a subject which has caused much research into low resonance arm construction, strange turntable mats (to mop up unwanted vibration in the record itself), etc. But the topics discussed were nicely handled, including the sometimes controversial equalisation versus tone control. And we actually had a survey and technical explanation of noise reduction techniques - marvellous! It is a pity that the written word cannot convey the different advantages and disadvantages of such techniques. I was intrigued to have some dates attached to these published or marketed noise reduction methods, as I was working along the same lines as the Packburn processor (switching between groove walls) as early as 1973, but only got something working in 1979, not having the time/money/technique to proceed any faster. My own device served me well for a few years until I decided to go back to stage one and the actual mechanisms of playing the records: this had the unexpected result that the sound was so much cleaner and clearer than before that (a) the records now sounded better with "crackle" than they did before without, and (b) the crackle-remover circuitry was now much more audible (as the "quockle" mentioned in the articles). So I had to ditch the lot, which was a pity.

I should like to be able to look forward personally to some digital processing (which could thus be under experimental computer control), but that is still rather expensive and is difficult to achieve in "real-time": CEDAR, NoNoise and the others take hours to process a 78 side - I want to hear what I'm doing as I go along! Which reminds me: a description of the NoNoise system recently touted by Philips on some CD reissues of elderly recordings would have been interesting. Perhaps this could be a future topic.

Yours sincerely, Peter Adamson
St. Andrews University, 19th November

People, Paper & Things

by George Frow

IN ITS SERIES "Old Stagers" on November 18th, BBC Radio paid a long-due tribute to our Honorary Member, Cavan O'Connor. An entertainer for 70 years and more, Cavan is still singing, although he concedes he doesn't undertake appearances too far from home nowadays. A selection of his recordings was played beginning with "A Little Bit of Heaven", and romantic favourites followed, like "I'll take you home again, Kathleen" and "In the still of the night". We were reminded of his experiences as a dance-band singer with a Geraldo excerpt, and learned that "The world is mine tonight" was written especially for him by Eric Maschwitz and George Posford. His first record of 1925, "A Wand'ring Minstrel I", was also heard. In spite of his Irish name Cavan was born in Nottinghamshire in 1899, but often appeared in Irish series like Jimmy O'Dea's Irish Half Hour, and as himself as The Vagabond Lover. He heads a charming and able family, and we are glad that his talents are not forgotten.

* * *

The BBC broke a long tradition at 3.00 p.m. on Friday October 28th, when "Imperial Echoes" heralded and closed the World Service **Radio Newsreel** for the last time since the early days of the last war, when the Forces Programme first came on the air. **Radio Newsreel** is now just **Newsreel**, and is introduced by a plastic jingle composed on, or even by, a synthesizer. All very sad, but "Imperial Echoes" was considered to have a dated sound, and I suspect it was too redolent of the days of the BBC Empire Service on the wireless. The recording used was that of the Central Band of the Royal Air Force, conducted by the (then) Squadron Leader R.P. O'Donnell: it was issued on a 10" 78 record in February 1939 (HMV B 8846). It is not difficult to find in reasonable condition. The march itself was published in 1914 by Arnold Safroni-Middleton (1873-1950), and although he wrote others, none achieved the popularity of "Imperial Echoes".

* * *

Despite lobbies for Peter Dawson, Stanley Kirkby and others, credit for the largest number of recordings in the British 78 catalogue has recently turned to Sam Browne, whose vocals with dance bands run into thousands, many without his name on the label. On American labels a prolific recorder was Irving Kaufman, while in Europe the Band of the Garde Republicaine turns up on so many makes. The same may be said internationally of Frank Ferera, whose Hawaiian guitar solos are found on just about every label. It is strange that next to nothing seems to be known about this prolific entertainer. Was he Italian or Spanish, as the f and r in his surname do not appear in Hawaiian? He sometimes made duets with Louise, maybe the Helen Louise who was perhaps also Louise Paaluli. John Paaluli, presumably her husband, sometimes teamed with Frank Ferera in duets or occasionally with Palakiko, who led his own Hawaiian orchestra on several labels.

* * *

A note in my local newspaper mentions that Leslie Stuart's last surviving daughter has died in a nearby nursing home, aged 91. She was Mrs. Lola Leslie Stuart Hine, and had survived her father by 60 years. He died in 1928 aged 62. Owners of early 7" Berliners will know Leslie Stuart's piano accompaniments on many of those from Maiden Lane. Fred Gaisberg wrote that Stuart (and Paul Rubens) used to visit the studio to accompany songs from their latest West End musical hits. Stuart made a solo early-electric Columbia (No.9093). It is not hard to find at record bazaars.

* * *

John Bratley was a regular at London meetings for many years. On retirement he transferred his machines and records from Rhodesia to the United Kingdom, and set them up in his roomy colonial-type bungalow. There were three or more large EMG-type gramophones and other horn and cabinet instruments, and a grand piano. He was never happier than when demonstrating these to friends, or playing his latest piano compositions. The Society was represented at his funeral, and we extend our sympathy to Margaret, his wife.

SOUND INVESTMENT

by Pete Thomas

IN HIS LETTER published in October's "Hillandale News", Joe Pengelly raises a number of very important factors regarding the accurate playback of discs and cylinders. His comments on our work in BBC Radio prompt me to elaborate a little on the background to this work. This, I hope, will answer many of his points, by explaining how we came to produce our new cylinder and disc players, and why we chose the solutions that we did.

Naturally, the first stage in any such project is to produce a basic specification for the equipment to be designed. This is the stage where so much can go wrong, so it is doubly important that everyone is sure about exactly what is wanted. It is very easy to produce something that doesn't quite fit the bill, and by the time you have found out - it's too late!

Our discussions with collectors, enthusiasts, and BBC archivists produced a specification which was relatively simple: the solution was not so! We needed replacements for several coarse disc players of 1940s vintage, and for an ageing cylinder player (based on an original Edison machine converted for use with a magnetic cartridge and electric motor - heresy!). The core requirements for the cylinder player emerged as:

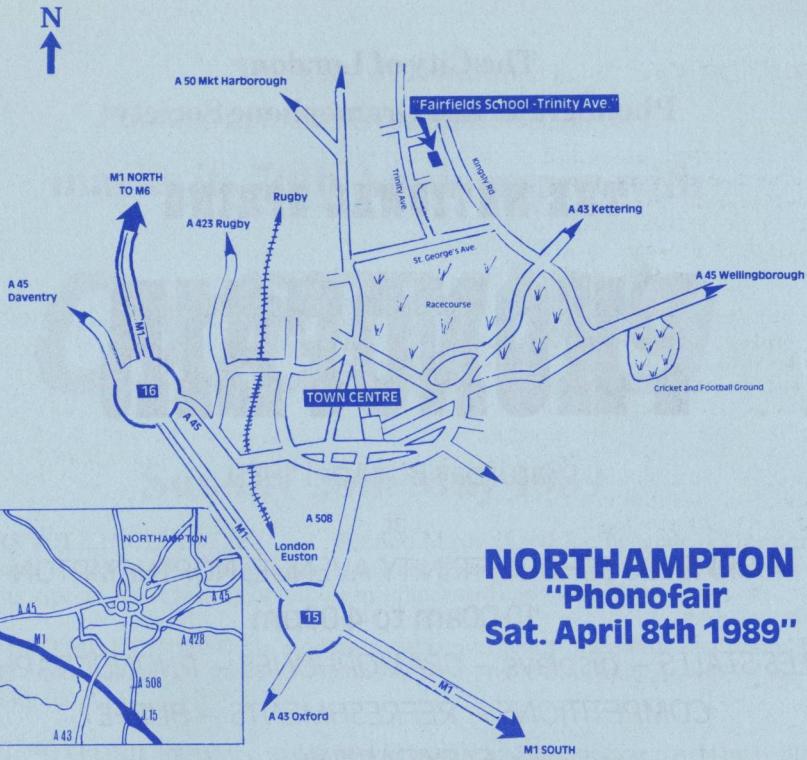
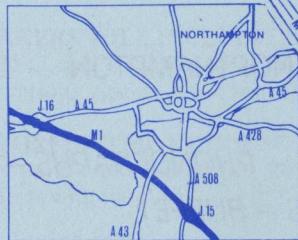
- (1) To playback the widest selection of cylinder formats available;
- (2) To reduce the potential damage to cylinders to zero;
- (3) To improve the quality of reproduction;
- (4) To provide straightforward operation for use by untrained staff;
- (5) The equipment must be reliable and last at least 10-15 years despite heavy use;
- (6) The machine must be portable.

It is not until these basic specifications are staring at you from the page that you start to see incompatible requirements. For example, point [1] does not easily live with point [6]. A player which would cope with

Kinetophone cylinders would not be very portable! Furthermore, the complexities of several different interchangeable mandrels to cope with every cylinder format would increase the skill required of the operator, particularly when you consider the change in pickup arm height required for the many different diameters. So, in consideration of these factors we felt that the machine's design need not normally be able to accommodate the largest cylinders, but should cope with those up to just under 4" diameter.

To satisfy points [2] and [3] (reduce the likelihood of damage, and improve reproduction) we listened to a variety of existing transfers from cylinders, and experimented with various arm/cartridge combinations. Our conclusion was that most cylinder players mistrack. In other words, the stylus is not always perfectly in contact with the cylinder groove, increasing the surface noise, producing distortion and, worse, damaging the cylinder. Our experiments gave us a clue why this was so. Most cylinder players did not cope at all well with warps, either vertical or horizontal. This was rather surprising, as most cylinders rotate at very high speeds, and even the smallest irregularity in the surface shakes the stylus and cartridge violently. All this violence causes the stylus momentarily to lose contact with the groove.

The solution, we found, was to couple a fairly stiff cartridge (low compliance) with an extremely light arm, so that the whole arm/cartridge combination could follow all the irregularities in the cylinder surface, and reproduce the recording unhindered. However, this approach required that the weight of the arm be almost nothing; not the most practical solution! Even



NORTHAMPTON "Phonofair Sat. April 8th 1989"

HOW TO GET TO THE PHONOFAIR

on Saturday April 8th 1989
(see details overleaf)

NOTICE

Members should receive a subscription renewal slip with this issue. Some members will be in credit: this has been taken into account in the "amount due." It would be greatly appreciated if members would pay promptly, to avoid the cost and effort of sending a reminder. REMEMBER TO RETURN the renewal slip with your payment: it is also a receipt once it is signed by the Treasurer and returned to you.

As agreed at the A.G.M. the subscription rates are now £9 for UK and Europe and £10 (or U.S.\$18) for the rest of the world. NOTE that Sea Mail is no longer available.

All members who have joined the Society since March 1988 should now have received all six bi-monthly magazines for 1988-89. If not, please notify the Treasurer when paying your new subscription.

The City of London
Phonograph and Gramophone Society

THE NATIONAL SPRING

PHONOFAIR

Saturday 8th April 1989

at

FAIRFIELDS SCHOOL, TRINITY AVENUE, NORTHAMPTON

10.00am to 4.00pm

SALES STALLS – displays – GRAMOPHONES – PHONOGRAPHS –

COMPETITIONS – REFRESHMENTS – BUFFET

EASY PARKING

xx

To: Ruth Lambert, [REDACTED]

(Please enclose stamped addressed envelope)

Name

Address

..... Postcode

I wish to book stall(s) at the National Spring Phonofair at £6.00 each. I enclose cheque/postal order for £..... payable to City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society (C.L.P.G.S.)

Telephone enquiries [REDACTED]

The City of London
Phonograph and Gramophone Society
marks its 70th Anniversary with

Oxford '89

Sunday 28th May 1989

SPEAKERS WILL INCLUDE: Jeff Link, Bennett Maxwell and Joe Pengelly, all formerly of the BBC, and Paul Morby of Birmingham University, another ex-BBC man. They will deal with various aspects of the history of talking machines and early sound recordings.

THE OXFORD MOAT HOUSE is a modern hotel conveniently placed for easy access from many parts and situated just north of Oxford at Wolvercote Roundabout, where the A40 connects with the A34.

BOOKING: "OXFORD '89" will cost £18.00 which will include coffee on arrival by 10.30 and a three-course luncheon. There will be two speakers before lunch break, and two after. The programme will allow ample time for members to mingle and renew acquaintances, and of course there will be a bar for those who are so inclined.

ACCOMMODATION IS LIMITED, so members are recommended to use the booking form to obtain their tickets early for what will be, we are sure, a most enjoyable day for all.

To: Mike Field, City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society.

Name Address

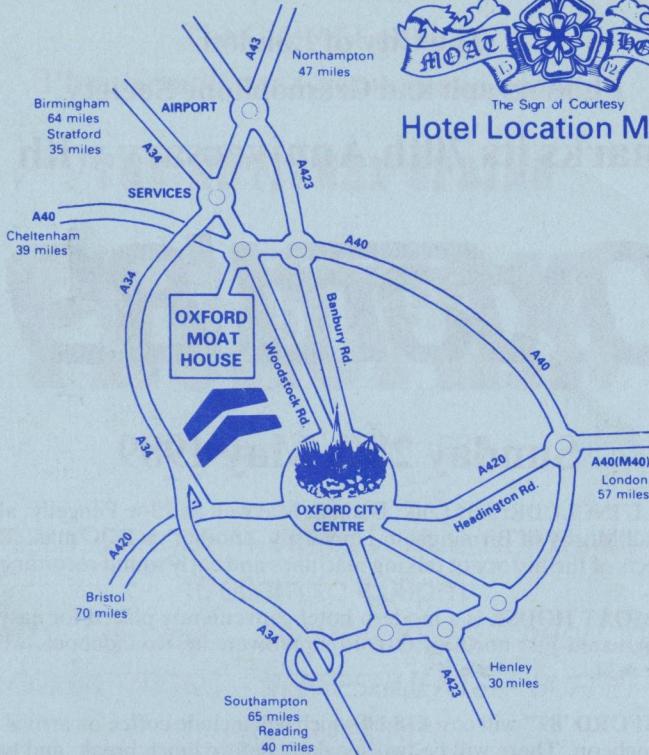
..... Postcode

Please send me tickets for OXFORD '89 at £18.00 (Eighteen pounds sterling) each. I enclose sterling cheque/postal order/money order to the value of £.....



The Sign of Courtesy

Hotel Location Map

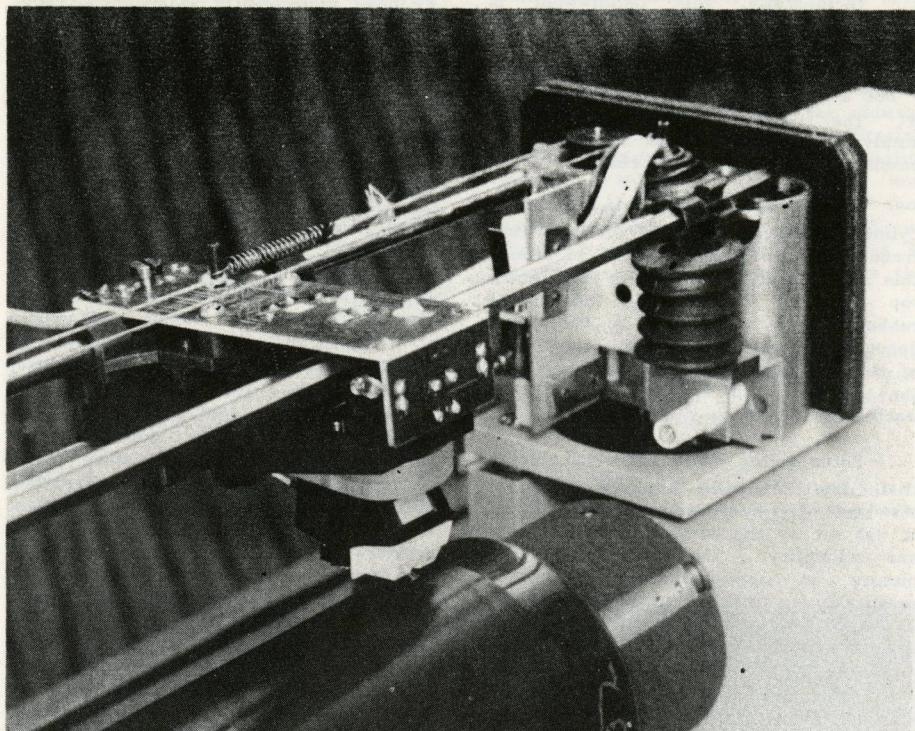


HOW TO GET TO **Oxford '89** Sunday 28th May 1989



HOW TO HANDLE RECORDS.

PULL CAREFULLY AWAY FROM STAPLES



the lightest pivoted arms were too heavy, so we turned to a tangential arm whereby the cartridge is mounted in a small, light plastic shell and moved backwards and forwards by a motor (see picture above). The cartridge is therefore controlled directly, and is not 'wagging' on the end of a nine or twelve inch arm.

We modified a Revox arm and with it were able to cope with the most 'difficult' of cylinders without recourse to half-speed play. The arm is moved along the cylinder by an electric motor controlled by two sensors which detect the slightest movement of the cartridge. Joe Pengelly's comment that the "stylus (is) searching around in the grooves" implies possible damage to delicate white waxes. In practice this is not the case: the sensitivity of the sensors is such that the force on the grooves is very low, and certainly does not reach the order of force often met on original machines, despite the feed screw drive. The fact that we have played a white wax never

before found to be playable on any other machine illustrates this 'lightness of touch'. The groove was exceptionally shallow, and yet the stylus was able to trace it under the control of the motor system. Playing a wide selection of cylinders now reveals that many which were believed to be distorted and damaged were in fact quite all right.

Joe further comments on the lack of reverse-play mode. This is quite true: it was deliberately omitted. Our experience so far indicates that methods such as reverse play and half-speed playback are only ways of side-stepping real problems in the playback equipment. If reverse play or half-speed playback give a noticeable improvement then something is usually wrong. In fact this is quite a good test of any cylinder or disc player. Had we proven that reverse play was useful, I doubt even then whether we would have incorporated this facility, bearing in mind the 'straightforward operation' specification.

Incidentally, this requirement is based on the speed of the transfer operation. The time we have available to transfer a cylinder or disc is very short - not much longer than it takes to play it! The requirement therefore is quite simply to obtain as good a transfer as possible in the minimum of time.

Another problem we found on many cylinder players was rumble (low frequency noise). We managed to reduce this significantly by 'floating' the whole top plate of the cylinder player on rubber mounts in addition to the motor decoupling. It is remarkable that much of the low frequency noise attributed to the cylinders is in fact produced by the machine on which they are played.

Peter Bulley and I are very pleased that Joe Pengelly appreciated the standard of construction of our player. It was set by the demands for robustness and reliability. The final design (see picture on opposite page) offers a reasonably portable machine (weight-lifting course optional!) which provides speeds variable from 50-250 rpm. The output is 'stereo' for use with electronic declickers, and it has an exceptionally wide frequency response to 'preserve' the clicks for subsequent detection.

* * * * *

The specification for the '78' player was much the same as that for the cylinder player, except for the exclusion of portability, and the range of discs the machine was to cater for.

The largest discs we had to deal with were notionally 12" diameter: for peace of mind we settled upon 13" clearance. Discs greater in diameter than this are separately looked after by dedicated players which will handle the 16" 'Voice of America', and will just play a 20" disc (I think). We did consider putting all our eggs on one basket, but the sheer size of a player handling discs up to 20" diameter was too great for the majority of applications, and the number of discs greater than 13" was, and still is, a very small percentage of our disc playback.

Joe Pengelly is absolutely right when he says our speed range is limited.

We have subsequently widened the range to 30-120 rpm, albeit for different reasons. The lower speed limit was set to allow vinyl discs to be played on this player, for its declicking properties (a subject worthy of a separate article) and for the half-speed enthusiasts. The upper limit was set because we didn't know of any discs recorded at a higher speed than 120 rpm! Thanks Joe - back to the drawing board! I can't help feeling, though, that if we go any faster than 120 rpm we shall have to call it a hovercraft.

One programme which really put us to the test was "Revolutions in Sound". Jeff Link, the producer of the series, always seemed to find a disc which our prototype player couldn't cope with. The experience was invaluable, since every conceivable disc format was unearthed during the research for this series. Amongst other things this led us to provide a detachable central spindle (for non-standard centre-hole diameters and those with no hole at all) and an arm which could play to within a quarter-inch of the central spindle.

With our experience of tracking problems and light-weight pick-up arms on the cylinder player project, we found the same arguments held true for disc playback. Our work in developing the cylinder player was therefore of great use in the completion of the new course-groove disc player. The final design used the modified Revox tangential arm, mounted on an EMT 948 professional turntable (see picture on front cover). It is worth pointing out that professional products are very expensive, and for good reason. It does seem odd that a reasonable domestic turntable may be bought for £100, when a professional equivalent will cost between five and eight thousand pounds. Apart from the special facilities usually offered by the professional machine, its cost reflects the robustness and reliability of the design, necessary if your turntable is to last 10-15 years, being used almost all day and every day. The £100 turntable would probably have a very limited life in a professional environment. From the cover picture you can see that we added a front control panel in order to provide switchable equalisations for correcting the multitude of different record

characteristics. Joe Pengelly is correct in saying that no disc player is free of electronic correction. However, this correction is the recommended 'mirror' of what is recorded, necessary in order to get back to the sound originally heard in the studio when it was recorded. What I certainly demonstrated to the CLPGS was that playing a 78 on our new player, with just the correct stylus size and equalisation, gives a sound quality which, without recourse to further 'correction' or filtering, possesses appreciably less noise and distortion. The scratches and noise often heard are being exaggerated by a poor disc player having an inadequate arm/cartridge and an incorrect stylus.

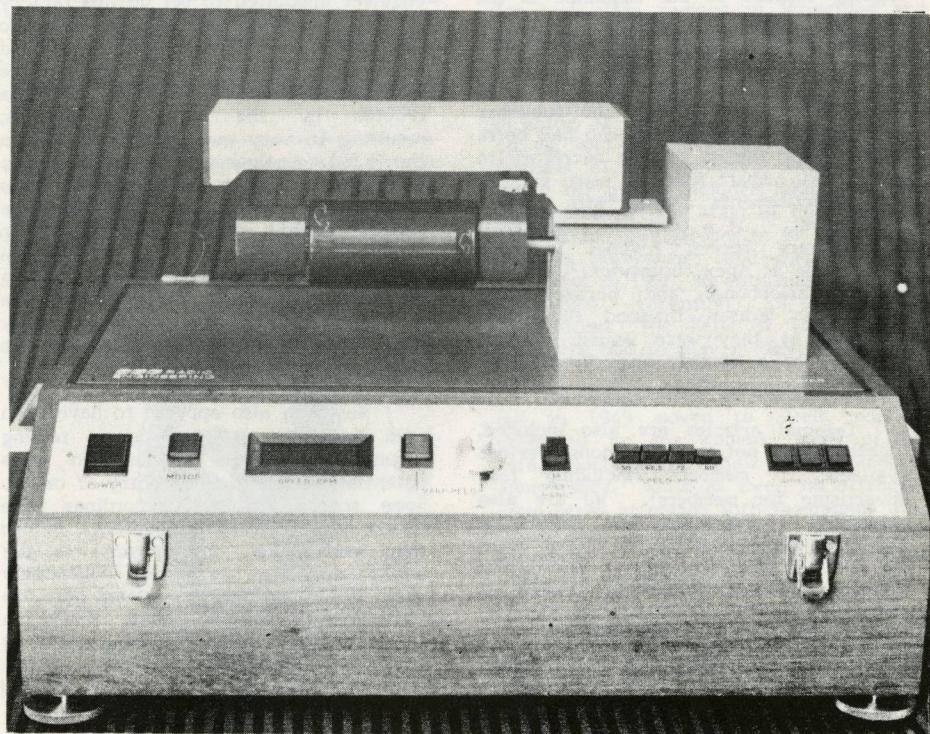
I don't think it was actually me who

said "the stylus alone gave near hi-fi quality". However, A.O. Leon-Hall was, I feel sure, kindly emphasising, that the 'neat' sound coming from our player was better than many transfers using lots of electronic 'toys'. Certainly, the addition of declicker units and careful filtering would improve the perceived quality further. My point was to show how wonderful these recordings are, and that before tinkering with the sound we should look at improving the ways in which we recover the signal from the disc.

I believe we are still getting only 50% of the quality and detail on these discs and cylinders. I intend to find the other half over the next few years.

My thanks to the Director of Engineering, BBC, for his permission to publish this article

Pete Thomas



COLLECTING IN AUSTRALIA

by David Ian McCallum

AS AN EX-MEMBER OF The City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society, I was kindly invited to submit a brief report on our activities in Sydney, with a view to establishing contacts and communication between your members and ours. With a specialised interest such as historic record and machine collecting I feel that the more cooperation that can be created the better; there are not that many of us, and often we find ourselves widely spread out in the geographic sense.

The Phonograph Society of N.S.W. was established in Sydney in 1973 after the original City of London Phonograph & Gramophone Society (Australian Branch), set up in 1966, had vanished in a local political imbroglio. Thus I feel we have always had strong ties with the London Society, regarding it in a somewhat parental rôle. Last year we commenced publication of a 40-page quarterly journal, in a similar format to your own, available to overseas subscribers at £10, or \$A22, per annum. The backbone, or ongoing feature of our magazine is the serialised reprint of the entire run of a Sydney-based magazine, *The Australasian Phonograph Monthly*, published from 1925 to 1927 in a style similar to *The Gramophone* of that era. The publisher was Count L. de Noskowski who had been, among other things, private secretary to Paderewski. Apart from the usual articles and advertisements dealing with matters gramophonic, it contains individual contemporary record reviews including such labels as Apex, Brunswick, Columbia, H.M.V., Parlophone, and perhaps most importantly, Edison Diamond Discs and Polydors, as they were issued. About one-third of a monthly magazine appears in each of our issues.

Original articles are also included, together with notices of various services available to members (including free advertising for members). We are also organising a reissue of the Parlophone Historical Series on L.P. at about \$A13 per L.P. or cassette tape. The master tape has been completed for Volume 1, and some items for the latter part of the series are still being sought in fine-condition originals. We need support for a venture such as this; vocal collectors please note! If we can make this viable, we hope to go on to produce reissues of other neglected artists on L.P.

We have in mind a re-issue of Harry Plunkett-Greene, to include his spoken lecture "Interpretations in Song."

The record industry has always been very active in Australia, although actual manufacture did not begin here in quantity until the mid-twenties. The major supplier was Columbia, then E.M.I., producing records for the Oceanic region from their large factory at Homebush, a suburb of Sydney. Overseas collectors may be interested to know that the engineer appointed to set up this factory in 1926 remained with E.M.I. well into the stereo era, and always maintained very high product standards. The factory originally produced Columbia records by the laminated process, resulting in very quiet pressings. When the E.M.I. amalgamation took place in 1931, the Australian factory defied Hayes and continued to press thereafter all the labels under their jurisdiction in laminated format. Thus Australian collectors are fortunate indeed that Reg Southey's stance has since enabled them to acquire many of the notoriously noisy H.M.V. Western-Electric recordings with relatively quiet surfaces.

Australia also appears to have been used from time to time as a testing ground for records of unknown sales potential outside their country of origin. Some scarce European recordings were issued here to gauge acceptance before they were taken on (or not) to the U.S.A. for release on Victor; conversely many Victor masters were issued here 'on trial' before perhaps being issued in Europe. The Vocalian Company also had a factory at Melbourne which, besides their own products, for a while pressed imported D.G./Polydor masters. German-pressed Polydors were also sold here, especially the high-priced light-green

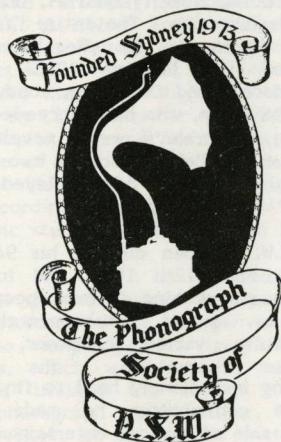
and silver series, where the European price-fixing could not be made to apply because of the free trade component in the Australian Constitution.

There were a number of small cylinder manufacturers here, and wide distribution of Edison products - Pathé, however, did not fare well in this part of the globe, although they are not unknown. Max Wurker of Sydney produced his patented reproducer for attachment to (mainly) Edison phonographs, and we hope to detail some of his activities in our magazine.

Finally, owing to the proliferation of commercial broadcasters in Australia, there have been thousands of 16" and 12" broadcast transcription discs circulated here, both in lateral cut and vertical (Westrex and R.C.A.). They are now becoming hard to find, but copies can often be obtained.

We look forward to corresponding with any of your members who care to write; I shall undertake to pass on any letters to our members who have a specific knowledge or interest in the area outlined.

Members who would like to correspond with our Australian friends should write to: David Ian McCallum, President, The Phonograph Society of N.S.W., [REDACTED] N.S.W. 2037, Australia.



Lighter Sides

by Peter Cliffe

No. 1 T.W. THURBAN

TALENTED AND VERSATILE, Thomas William Thurban also possessed an engaging eccentricity. The son of a fancy stationery warehouseman, he was born at Islington on January 3rd 1874. He appears to have had no formal musical training, and at first intended to become an engineer. Instead, he learned to play the piano and violin, later adding the harp, trumpet, saxophone, drums, mandoline, banjo, and piano-accordian. He became acknowledged as a virtuoso on this last instrument.

For fifteen years he was at the London Coliseum, first as leader of the orchestra and later as conductor. He wielded the baton, too, at other famous theatres and music halls, among them the Tivoli, Oxford, Holborn Empire and Victoria Palace. In France he directed the music for high-class casinos in Marseilles and Nice, and at one time conducted at the Municipal Opera House, Lyons.

Forever restless, he became musical director of the Great Carno's travelling circus, and in 1905 was pianist at the Duchess of Marlborough's house-warming, where the guests included Edward VII and Alexandra. At the start of the Great War he had his own orchestra at the Winter Gardens, Morecambe; and when he was at Blackpool in 1920, so enthusiastic was the audience's reception of his own composition "The Bells of Llanelly", his orchestra had to play it three times.

For many years he lived at Surbiton, but in 1949 moved to Ewell, possibly unsettled by the recent death of his wife, shortly after their golden wedding anniversary. While at Ewell he attracted local press attention with the launch of a baby car he had helped to design. Although it ran successfully, it never went into production.

Thurban's compositions were as varied as his life-style, and many were recorded. As early as 1893 he wrote "Brookland", later claiming that it was Britain's first jazz composition; and in 1898 came "The Brooklyn Cake-Walk",



Picture by kind permission of Mrs. Ann Thurban

long popular and ragtime influenced. He dabbled with other ragtime themes, his "Pussy Cat Rag" being sung for Pathé by Ruby Roya. "Twilight Dreams" conveyed a hint of ragtime, although its creator called it a march. In September 1913 it was recorded for Regal by the studio-assembled Regal Orchestra; and the Empire Orchestra's version for Pathé standard was probably made around that time.

When Thurban played dance music, it owed more to Archibald Joyce than to Paul Whiteman. The quartet of obscure tunes his band waxed for Regal early in 1920 bear this out. His intriguingly named two-step "Mandy on the Mash" appeared on Beka, played by Marek Weber and his Orchestra, and on Pathé by the Imperial Orchestra, directed by Arthur Crudge. It was Crudge who directed the Mayfair Orchestra for HMV in October 1912, for its very first recording session, and he was responsible for other sessions until at least the summer of 1917.

Thurban once claimed to have composed the music for around 1,200 songs, not always under his own name. While this is possibly an exaggeration, he was amazingly prolific. Such Music Hall greats as Gertie Gitana, R.G. Knowles, Marie Lloyd, and George Mozart used Thurban's humorous songs; so did Little Tich, who recorded at least seven of them for Pathé Standard. They included "The Tallyman", for which Thurban's collaborator was Sax Rohmer (real name Arthur Sarsfield Ward), a Birmingham born novelist and playwright of Irish parentage, best remembered as the creator of "Fu Manchu", villain of many exotic thrillers.

Thurban also wrote much attractive light orchestral music, including a number of suites. "Watermelon Fete" came from "Americana" and was recorded for Zonophone (in November 1930) by the International Novelty Quartet, under John Firman's direction. The entire "Yankiana" suite appeared on Regal-Zonophone, recorded (in January 1935) by the Commodore Grand Orchestra, conducted by Harry Davidson, who had succeeded Joseph Muscant. Thurban's pretty novelty, "The Voice of the Bells", took up two sides of a Regal record in 1932, played by the 'studio' Bohemia Orchestra.

T.W. Thurban died in his 94th year on December 12th 1967, and today his name means nothing to most people. He was a gifted instrumentalist, a delightfully varied composer, and a likeable 'character'. His records, becoming increasingly hard to find, attest to the contribution he made to the lighter side of musical entertainment.

* * * * *

London Meetings

by A.O. Leon-Hall
ABBEY ROAD

ICANNOT REMEMBER HAVING seen more people packed into our Room In Bloomsbury. They had come from as far afield as Newmarket to hear Suzanne Lewis from EMI Music Archives, who, having promised a talk on the Abbey Road recording studios, delivered that and more besides, beginning with a comprehensive account of Abbey Road's predecessors in London, the studios at Maiden Lane, at City Road, and at Hayes. Her talk was illustrated with slides and with a careful selection of records significantly associated with the working history of each of these venues.

As on a previous occasion with a different speaker there was, shall we say, a carefree informality about the presentation of the slides and the order in which they appeared. This time, though, there was excuse enough, since Miss Lewis was having to concentrate hard on making herself heard above the considerable distraction of an enthusiastic and noisy Revivalist meeting in an adjoining hall. She won through, but it was unusual to hear the accompanying records against an increasingly joyful background of rhythmical handclapping.

The great Fred Gaisberg was opposed to Osmond Williams' proposal for new studios at 3 Abbey Road, preferring to soldier on at Hayes, and convinced the Directors would not back the scheme. It was Alfred Clark who supported the idea, so that on 12th November 1931 the grand new complex opened its doors to an audience of distinguished guests. The day saw Sir Edward Elgar complete the fine recording (which we heard) of his symphonic study "Falstaff", begun the day before.

The slides included many quite well-known pictures of the successive studios, but also many, gleaned from the EMI Archives, which were new to me. For instance, besides the famous "opening day" photograph with Elgar, George Bernard Shaw, et al, we saw pictures of the three studios, all of them now fitted

with no fewer than six microphones, each with its own controller; and of the Compton organ which once graced the sizeable concert hall of Studio One. (This instrument, used by such organists as Reginald Dixon and 'Fats' Waller, was eventually dismantled and removed to a barn in Liskard, Cornwall, where it lies rotting still.) We were shown, too, pictures of the famous mobile recording van, the one which took the recordings of the best-selling "Hear My Prayer" at the Temple Church in London.

It was all fascinating, and Suzanne Lewis must have been pleased when at the end of her talk she was rewarded with a pretty bouquet, sustained applause, and ecstatic Hallelujahs from next door.

PLAYING TO THE GODS

FIVE DAYS BEFORE CHRISTMAS we saw the successful debut at Bloomsbury of Rick Hardy who, making a determined effort to overcome his deep natural shyness, offered a celebration of the Edwardian Music Hall. In his youth Mr. Hardy was a regular habitué of Collins Music Hall in Islington, and although too late by some decades to qualify for the Edwardian era, he has colourful memories of this peculiarly British entertainment. He presented a lavish play-bill, a cast so large that in the end many of them were unable to get onto the stage. Never mind, we heard Nellie Wallace; Ella Shields (a single-sided private recording, one of only 12 pressed); the 70-year-old Kate Carney, "live" at Collins, on a tape transcribed from acetates made by her daughter from a 1940s broadcast; Harry Champion; Albert Chevalier; and many others. Some of the records were played, to good effect, on one of those tiny Columbia 100 portables. It is a pleasure to watch Rick Hardy at work: he so obviously has an affection and an involvement with each record. While it plays he beams, sings along, dances about, and thoroughly enjoys himself, so that the spectator is quickly caught up in the fun: the audience was joining in the choruses by the time the third record was played. Just right for Christmas, and enjoyed together with mince pies and a fine Chateau Frow.

Regional News

by John Calvert

Midlands Group. The Group at their meeting in September heard a programme presented jointly by Jonathan Sanders and Wal Fowler, entitled "Beauties and Oddities". Jonathan presented amongst his beauties, Margaret Ritchie, Victoria Monks, Elsie Carlisle, and Lily Morris, of the oddities there was a recording of G.W. Johnson, on Zon-O-Phone 903: his claim to fame being that he was the first known recording artist to be hanged for murder (his Wife!), another record was of Canon Fleming, the well known Victorian Orator, reciting Edgar Allan Poe's "The Bells". Wal presented a programme of comedy items of such artists as Billy Maynard, Windsor Davies and Stanley Unwin.

Discussion at the November meeting centred around what sort of celebration the Group would hold in 1989 to mark their 21st anniversary, when it was agreed that something suitable would be decided at the January AGM. The discussion was followed by a programme given by Roger Preston entitled 'Unusually Talented', in which he presented recordings of 13 different items of music and speech, including Sir Thomas Beecham in rehearsal (where the rain on the studio roof could be heard), Tony Hancock (The Blood Donor), The Red Army Ensemble, Dame Eva Turner, Jussi Bjorling, and Joyce Grenfell.

Severn Vale. The October meeting had a presentation from Don Watson, in which he gave members an opportunity of hearing some interesting operatic recordings from his collection, which included The Finale from Carmen sung by Zenatello and Maria Gay (husband and wife and both over sixty when the recording was cut), "Spirito Gentil" from La Favorita, sung by Caruso and recorded in 1906 and "Casta Diva" from Norma sung by Maria Callas on one of the only three 78s she made for Cetra in 1949.

The Musical Quiz billed for the December meeting had to be cancelled due to Gilbert Fury being unable to attend, instead, the meeting spent time arranging the Group's programme for 1989,

and discussion on what it would be doing to celebrate its 21st anniversary.

Northampton. Although no Group exists here, Ruth Lambert aided by friends is to organise a National Spring Phonofair for the Society on the 8th April, which will be held at Fairfields School, Trinity Avenue, Northampton. In addition to the stalls, there will be a display of gramophones and accessories, Concours d'Elegance, Nipper Cartoons, and the CLPGS Bookshop. Refreshments will be available including an excellent buffet. We hope that members will give this event their support, since it is hoped to establish it as an annual event. Details of how to get there are included with this issue of "Hillendale."

West Germany. A request has been received from one of our members who lives in Heikendorf, for information regarding the Metropol Rekord. The member Dr. Georg Moll, is the grandson of August Moll, who together with August Kybarth founded the Metropol Rekord factory at Aprelewka (today the home of Melodia), the firm was later carried on by Dr. Moll's father until the revolution. Dr. Moll is particularly interested in obtaining details of any of the Metropol records which may be in members' possession, as he is engaged in writing a history of the company. Should any member be able to help, perhaps they would be kind enough to write to Dr. Georg Moll, [REDACTED]

REGIONAL DIARY

Severn Vale. Saturdays 6.30 p.m. at the Foley Arms, Tarrington. 18th February: Adrian Tuddenham, SOUND RETRIEVAL SYSTEMS. 22nd April: John Calvert, THE ART OF CHALIAPIN.

LONDON MEETINGS

Tuesdays 7.00 p.m. at the Bloomsbury Institute, 4th Floor, Bloomsbury Central Baptist Chapel, 235 Shaftesbury Avenue, London W.C.2

21st February: Timothy Day, THE NATIONAL SOUND ARCHIVE. March 21st: Chris Hamilton, 100 YEARS OF TALKING MACHINES. 18th April: Free-for-All: bring a record relating to a Trade, Profession, or Occupation.

Record Review

THE CLASSIC HOAGY CARMICHAEL

by Ted Cunningham

THIS SUMPTUOUS COLLECTION of Hoagy Carmichael's work springs from a collaboration between the Indiana Historical Society and the Smithsonian Collection of Recordings in Washington, but it is first and foremost the work of John Edward Hasse, Curator of American Music at the Smithsonian Institution. Hasse took his Ph.D at Indiana University some fifty years after the young Hoagland Howard Carmichael took his law degree there. Ten years' research and the assistance of many people have resulted in this impressive tribute to his old alumnus. It comprises 55 recordings of classic Carmichael songs performed by some of the finest artists of the past sixty years, arranged in rough chronological order from 1927 to the late 1980s. The four LPs come attractively boxed, together with a handsome 64-page book written by Hasse. It is lavishly illustrated with photographs, some rare, of the composer and the recording artists; also a good biography of Carmichael as man and as musician, select discography and filmography, notes on lyricists and collaborators, etc. Mainly, though, it has extensive notes on each of the chosen recordings. For each title we get: Composer & lyricist; publication date; publisher; complete personnel of orchestras and vocalists; date and place of recording; first issue label and catalogue number; matrix number; followed by an informative article covering the circumstances of the composition and its recording. All this for £18.60! I don't know how they do it.

Hasse has chosen what he considers to be the best interpretation of each Carmichael song. When in doubt he has included more than one, so there are TWO versions of each of: "Georgia on my Mind"; "Lazy River"; "Rockin' Chair"; and "Skylark"; whilst no fewer than SIX recordings of "Stardust" are dotted about over the eight sides, from Louis Armstrong in 1931 to Wynton Marsalis in 1984. The whole collection allows one to reflect how fashions in interpretation have changed as the years have passed. Personally I found several of the later tracks bordering into self-indulgence, once we get into the part of the book where the photographs show the singers holding microphones up to their lips: but there will be those who disagree.

The chosen orchestras include Paul Whiteman, Bennie Moten, Claude Hopkins, Benny Goodman, Jimmy Dorsey, Bob Crosby, etc., etc. The artists: Mildred Bailey, The Mills Brothers, Billie Holiday, Bing Crosby, Ella Fitzgerald, etc., etc. Inevitably many of these "best interpretations" come from Hoagy Carmichael himself. Nine of the tracks are his, including not only such classics as "Hong Kong Blues", "The Old Music Master", and "Ole Buttermilk Sky", which nobody has ever bettered, but some surprises and rarities as well: a previously unissued acetate

from 1934 on which he sings two pleasant songs, "Judy", and "Moon Country": a rare acetate of "Lazy River" from 1941: a demonstration record, never issued, of an unknown song, "Serenade to Gabriel", and a sparkling jewel, "The Monkey Song", transcribed from a live BBC London broadcast of August 1948.

The set as originally published in the USA had 57 titles, not 55. Unfortunately "contractual problems" mainly involving material belonging to RCA Records, has precluded eight numbers' inclusion in the UK, (BBC Enterprises) edition. The publishers have provided substitutes for six of these, and on the whole they are well chosen. It is a shame to have to miss Ethel Waters' "Old Man Harlem", but a delight to gain instead a superb version by the Eddie South Orchestra: I am resigned to the loss of Artie Shaw's "Stardust", having been given instead Coleman Hawkins' 1935 Paris recording, with Django Reinhardt on guitar and Stephane Grappelli on piano. Still, I would have liked to have Sinatra's "Lamplighter's Serenade" instead of the substituted Bing Crosby version, an over-sentimental coast-through. The publishers have decided, rightly, I believe, that there are two numbers so unusual that no substitutes are possible: "Georgia on my Mind" by Ray Charles, and the version of "Stardust" in which Frank Sinatra sings only the verse. Since the book is the original American edition, you get the full details of the deleted items, and a separate card provides information on the substitute recordings.

Very conveniently though, the entire British listing is repeated on the back of the box.

The quality of the transfers is good on the whole (remastering by Jack Towers, except for the UK substitute tracks, by Paul Gilham). I wonder why a better copy of "Ole Buttermilk Sky" could not have been found: I could have lent them mine, which is quieter. It should not have been too difficult to find a copy of the Bob Hope/Shirley Ross "Two Sleepy People" record without the wow in the final grooves betraying it as a "swinger". There is an unpleasant distortion on one or two of the later tracks, notably Carmen McRae's "Skylark". But out of 55 titles this is not too bad. Everyone will find their own favourites. Mine are probably the sublime 1940 Kate Smith singing "Can't get Indiana off my Mind"; and an eerie, haunting rendering of Carmichael's penultimate song, "Winter Moon" by Art Pepper on alto saxophone, made in 1980.

"For contractual reasons" the set as reviewed is available only within the UK. Overseas members might find that the original US version, or some other, is available to them.

THE CLASSIC HOAGY CARMICHAEL: 4-disc Album Boxed Set BBC 4000 £18.60; 3-cassette Boxed Set ZCJ 4000 £18.60; 3-Compact Disc Boxed Set BBC CD 3007 £27.60. Obtainable by Mail Order (UK only) from: "Hoagy Carmichael Offer", BBC Enterprises, [REDACTED]

Book Reviews

IRISH FOLK MUSIC

by Pekka Gronow

A Short Discography of Irish Folk Music, by Nicholas Carolan. Folk Music Society of Ireland, [REDACTED] 40 pages

(1987) £2.50 post paid.

TO MOST READERS of this magazine the word "discography" probably brings to mind a compilation of detailed information about recordings: titles, recording dates, original and reissue numbers, and so on. Nicholas Carolan's "Short discography of Irish folk music" does not live up to such expectations. It is a list of recommended LPs, with brief commentary by the author.

Irish folk music is well known all around the world, but record production in Ireland itself has been relatively modest. On the other hand, recordings of Irish music have frequently been published by British companies, and the large Irish-American community has also prompted American companies to issue recordings of Irish music. This has added variety to the output, but also makes it difficult for the enthusiast to keep track of available recordings.

Nicholas Carolan's booklet is obviously aimed for the enthusiast, whether Irish or otherwise, who has acquired a taste for traditional Irish music and wishes to expand his record collection. The listings are arranged by type of performance: singing in Irish and English, solo instruments (violin, pipes, flute etc.) and groups. Within each category, listings are alphabetical by performer. For each recording, only album title, label, catalogue number, and year of publication are given: song titles for individual tracks, group personnels, and other details have been omitted. The following is a typical listing for a fiddle LP:

Boyle, Neal, Donegal THE MOVING CLOUDS, Folktracks FSA-60-170 (cassette), 1977

Both currently-available and out-of-print issues have been listed, but the author makes no claim for completeness. "Personal taste has inevitably suggested some recordings to the exclusion of others, but care has been taken to include items representative of authentic traditional style", Carolan writes in his foreword. A quick check failed to produce many important omissions. One LP that might have been worthy of inclusion is the Shanachie (US) LP, **The Wheels of the World** (33001), an anthology which contains additional recordings by many of the instrumentalists listed in the booklet.

Nicholas Carolan has also written a useful brief introduction to each chapter, and there is also an address list of record companies. Of

the forty addresses given, about half are in Ireland, one in Belfast, and the rest divided between England and the U.S. For anyone interested in Irish folk music this is an essential publication. But the discographer will probably want to wait for the results of the author's "ongoing work on a comprehensive discography of Irish folk music from the 1890s to date" which is mentioned in the foreword.

PETER DAWSON, KING OF SONG

by Peter Martland

Once a Jolly Swagman, by John D. Vose. Obtainable from John D. Vose, [REDACTED] Blackpool, Lancs. FY2 9AW. 170 pages, price U.K. £7.95; Australia \$19.

IT IS NEARLY THIRTY YEARS since Peter Dawson, the Australian bass-baritone, published his memoirs, "Fifty Years of Song". So it was with great pleasure that I received John Vose's book, hoping that it would contain a reassessment of this singer's art, something long overdue. I was alas disappointed. Mr. Vose sub-titles this work, "Tribute to Peter Dawson The King of Song", and that is exactly what it is. Using excellent sources here in Britain, in Australia, and in the USA, John Vose has recreated for us an excellent account of the public face of this artist. Newspaper accounts of his concerts, broadcasts and recording activities are used extensively, and to good effect. Those of us who never heard Dawson in the flesh have had until now no means of telling what his contemporaries thought of him. John Vose quotes from both published and previously unpublished sources, as rich and varied as, Anne Ziegler and Webster Booth - who Dawson helped get his first recording contract, the written archives of the BBC, and many more. The book tells us a great deal about the career and much about the legend. What is missing is an assessment of Peter Dawson's art, and thus the man. To be fair John Vose makes it clear at the beginning that he believes Dawson revealed all he wanted us to know about himself in his memoirs. Thus the author feels he must respect that limitation. Some may feel this self limitation is admirable; others that it is a lost opportunity. It could be argued that to begin to understand an artist as complex as Peter Dawson we must look at the man behind the public mask; question why he did not become a great star of opera, why he chose such a self limiting repertoire, and why, despite his world tours he never took on the USA. Until this task has been completed it could be argued that Peter Dawson was a plumber who sang. This is I am sure a great mistake. John Vose has done an excellent, if self limiting job, in writing this book. It is well illustrated and contains many anecdotes about the career and the times of this extraordinary artist. I can only encourage Peter Dawson enthusiasts to obtain a copy. They will greatly profit by doing so.

THE CARUSOPHONE

by G. W. Taylor

WHAT, NOT ANOTHER obscure talking machine? This one sounds like a joke. Not at all; it was invented by a resourceful group of British Antarctic explorers.

I have already summarised the place of the gramophone in the activities of Scott's Antarctic Expedition of 1910-1913 (Hillandale 163). Apart from the main party, whose objective was the South Pole, there was also a Northern Party of six men, whose objectives were mainly scientific: geology, weather observations, and so forth. Their hut was in a different location from that of the main base and they, also, had a much-used gramophone. The team embarked on a series of scientific observations which involved one of them waking every two hours during the long winter nights. Unfortunately they did not have an alarm clock, so something had to be improvised. This involved the gramophone, and is best described in the words of the geologist of the party, Raymond Priestley.*

"At one end of a board about 3 feet long was fixed a rigid upright, and at the other end a piece of bamboo which acted as a movable spring. About halfway between these was a stand, which held a candle, graduated by experiment, and bored with holes through wax and wick at intervals, each of which represented a time-space of two hours. A piece of thread was tied to the fixed upright, and from there passed through the top hole of the candle; its other end was tied to the bamboo spring, and drawn tight, so that the latter was in a state of considerable tension. Another piece of thread passed from the spring to the starting-handle of the gramophone. The gramophone was then wound up to its fullest extent, the needle placed in position at the commencement of a record, and the alarm was ready to work.

"At midnight the latest member of the party turned in, and before doing so he lighted the candle on the

'Carusophone'. This then burnt steadily for two hours while all hands slept the sleep of the just, until at two o'clock the appointed span was completed, and the thread which passed through the wick was burnt through. Then the bamboo spring, released by the breaking of the thread, sprang back, and pulled over the starting-lever of the gramophone. The plate and record then commenced to revolve, to the accompaniment of a noise which bordered on the infernal, and was at first calculated to wake the whole party. In case the watchman should become used to the noise we selected as the record which performed this honourable duty every night the 'Flower Song' from Carmen, sung by Signor Caruso, not, I am afraid, because of our classical taste in music, but because it was the loudest we possessed. In consequence the gramophone alarm was christened "The Carusophone", and its efficacy was such that on one occasion only, when the draught during a blizzard blew out the candle, did it fail to go off, and on no single occasion did it fail to wake the night watchman. Indeed, for the first week or two, judging by the comments it evoked, it woke everyone, but even then we were so proud of it that no one said nearly as much as might have been expected, while after a week or two its only effect was to give a somewhat noisy trend to our dreams."

Having completed his two-hour shift, the observer "set the alarm, moved the trumpet of the gramophone round so that it was directed to its next victim, and then turned in." Good idea! And, by the way, two more titles can be added to the list of records with Scott's expedition, from Priestley's book. (1). Flower Song (Carmen): Enrico Caruso. Victor matrix C-8349; HMV 2-052007, recorded November 1909: this recording rather than the 1905 version with piano presumably. (2) I hear you calling me: John McCormack (?) Victor matrix B-8695-2; HMV 4-2076. (My source gives 16th March 1911 as the recording date; surely this should be 1910?).

*Antarctic Adventure: Scott's Northern Party, Raymond E. Priestley. (T. Fisher Unwin 1914, reprinted McClelland and Stewart, 1974.)

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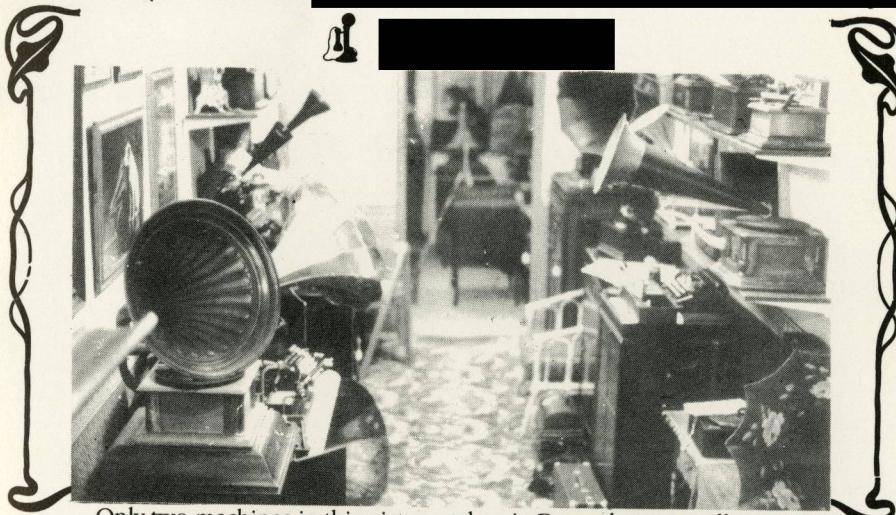
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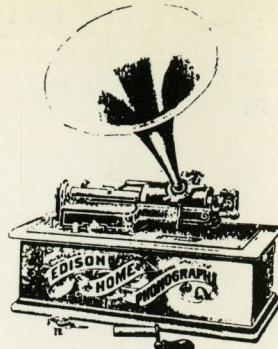
HOWARD HOPE



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